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ABSTRACT

To assess the relative importance of selected educational needs for adult students in New York's two-year colleges, samples of faculty/staff, younger (17-24) traditional college students, and older (25+ years) re-entry adult students were administered the Survey of Student Needs, a 75-item questionnaire tapping the following five facets of the collegiate experience: academic survival skills, personal development, instructional patterns, curricular services, and support services. Chi-square analyses indicated several major trends. High priority items for re-entry adults included evening and weekend classes and registration, life-experience credit, and vocabulary and math skill improvement. Both younger and older students exhibited a strong preference for memory, concentration, and study skill improvement; for relaxed, informal, encouraging instructors who provide examples in their lectures; and for a broad educational background. Re-entry adult women expressed a significant need for remedial and support services, encouragement and reassurance, and academic survival skill improvement. Faculty/staff perceived the needs of re-entry adults as more important than the adults themselves had indicated. Data were organized into a three-level ordering of needs ranked within facets, and institutional resources were inventoried according to the identified needs of re-entry adult students. (Author)

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FINAL REPORT

MEETING ACADEMIC SUCCESS

NEEDS OF RE-ENTRY ADULTS

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VEA-78-457-PS

TWO-YEAR COLLEGE DEVELOPMENT CENTER
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK AT ALBANY

IN COOPERATION WITH

THE GRANTS ADMINISTRATION BUREAU
NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

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Abstract

To assess the relative importance of selected educational needs for adult students in two-year colleges, samples of faculty/staff, younger (17-24 years) traditional college students, and older (25+ years) re-entry adult students were administered the Survey of Student Needs, a 75-item questionnaire tapping the following five facets of the collegiate experience: Academic Survival Skills, Personal Development, Instructional Patterns, Curricular Services, and Support Services. Chi-square analyses indicated several major trends. High priority items for re-entry adults included evening and weekend classes and registration, life-experience credit, and vocabulary and math skill improvement. Both younger and older students exhibited a strong preference for memory, concentration, and study skill improvement; for relaxed, informal, encouraging instructors who provide examples in their lectures; and for a broad educational background. Re-entry adult women expressed a significant need for remedial and support services, encouragement and reassurance, and academic survival skill improvement. Faculty/staff perceived the needs of re-entry adults as more important than the adults themselves had indicated. Data were organized into the Need Taxonomy of Re-Entry Adult Two-Year College Students, a three-level ordering of needs ranked within the facets. Institutional resources were inventoried according to the identified needs of re-entry adult students.

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Dr. Richard Alfred	Director of Planning Research and Development New York City Community College
Dr. Paul Bedell	Vice President of Student Affairs SUNY Farmingdale
Dr. John Cotnam	Dean of Continuing Education Monroe Community College
Ms. Jane Gilley	Research Assistant Columbia-Greene Community College
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Meeting Academic Success Needs of Re-Entry Adults

Introduction

Statement of Purpose

Recent years have witnessed an upsurge in adult college enrollment, and demographic projections suggest this trend will continue unabated into the next decade. Guided by the "hope that in the 1980's nontraditional students will fill the classrooms that are emptied by the contraction of the eighteen-to-twenty-four age cohort" (Bishop & Van Dyk, 1977, p. 40), the adult student population represents "new financial blood for static and dying institutions" (McDermott, 1975, p. 271). As Vice President Mondale (1976) has succinctly indicated:

Between 1970 and 2000 the number of persons over 20 will have increased from 127 million to 190 million. With the declining birth rate and the extension of life expectancy there will be more adult Americans who want and need to live productive lives for longer periods of time than ever before. And for the first time in many years, we seem to have educational resources--teachers, laboratories, dormitories--that are not being fully used. According to a recent National Institute of Education report, "Community colleges have resources and are looking, for both financial and philosophical reasons, to serve new groups." (p.44)

While the adult enrollment figures have risen steadily during the past decade, educational planners have not experienced a comparable increase in their understanding of these non-traditional students. Thus there is a paucity of information concerning the difficulties encountered by adults who are re-entering an educational system shaped and organized primarily for the recent high school graduate.

Out of school for five years or more and bringing with them a set of experiences entirely different from those of traditional students,

these "re-entry"¹ adults are nevertheless expected to adapt to an educational environment in which instructional methods, administrative regulations, curricular materials, support services, and even attitudes are typically oriented toward the younger students.

Whatever else their difficulties or shortcomings, colleges and universities are singularly ill-equipped to serve the needs of adults. Most campuses are handicapped by attitudes which have assigned adult learners to a second-class status, have relegated them to night or extension courses, to inferior degrees, to haphazard faculty, and more. On top of this, colleges have expected adults to march to the same teaching methods and institutional procedures designed for persons preparing for rather than already engaged in society. (McDermott, 1975, p.271)

Fortunately, this specter is beginning to fade as educational institutions, charged with lifelong learning, seek realistic approaches "to teach not just the 'rising' [generation], but all generations to be free" (Ambach, 1977, p. 14).

Given the current fiscal condition of higher educational institutions, coupled with the influx of older students, it behooves colleges to accept the challenge created by these re-entry adults. This challenge, however, is not to simply absorb adult students into extant academic programs, but to recast the total institutional effort to facilitate adults' successful return to, participation in, and completion of formal study.

During FY'78, in response to these concerns, the Two-Year College Development Center received support from the Grants Administration Bureau, New York State Education Department, to access information on re-entry adults in 2-year colleges. Funding for this project was provided under PL 94-482, Title II, Vocational Education, Subpart 3, Education Amendments of 1976.

1 The term "re-entry" is used to designate those individuals re-entering the educational system after being away for time periods ranging from only a few years to as many as twenty years or more.

The overall goal of this project was to determine the needs of re-entry adult two-year college students in selected occupational curricula and to assist New York State two-year colleges in providing program support services for these non-traditional students.

The specific objectives of this project were:

1. To identify the perceived needs of re-entry adult students in the business, health services, and trade/technology curricula at New York State two-year colleges;
2. To taxonomize the identified needs; and,
3. To inventory institutional and community resources according to the identified needs.

Statements of Constraints

It should be understood that this project was not intended to be exhaustive in its scope, content, or implications. During the course of the project, circumstances arose which necessitated modification of intended implementation. Inadequate data bases on non-matriculated part-time students hampered population identification and effected changes in definitions and sampling techniques. In addition, individual campus regulations precluded the use of a uniform procedure for administering the surveys.

While these constraints were real and must be considered in the final evaluation of this report, the findings have retained their potential for institutional impact.

Related Research

"It is clear that older students have important needs that should be met, and equally clear that many of their needs are different from

those of younger students" (Lenning & Hanson, 1977, p. 285). Since adult students presumably differ from traditional college students, several researchers have investigated inter-group comparisons.

In studying the characteristics of adult part-time students in selected public community colleges, Swinburne (1970) reported that adults were concerned with the time investment in college attendance and resented time-consuming, non-instructional activities, such as complex registration procedures. This need for expediency in pursuing academic goals was also noted by Warren and Roelfs (1972). Using formal interviews, they found that re-entry adults, in contrast to traditional college students, had more immediate objectives, exhibited greater goal specificity, and were less willing to explore various educational alternatives.

In analyzing the data from the 1971 administration of the Student Reactions to College (SRC) questionnaire, Roelfs (1975) found significant age-related trends. Consistent with increasing age were fewer academic problems, lighter course loads, and greater amounts of out-of-class study time. Older students, in general, were more highly motivated, were more satisfied with conventional (instructor-centered) classes and lectures, and exhibited greater program certainty.

As part of an educational needs assessment at the College of Alameda (California), Medsker (1977) reported that older students most frequently expressed: a willingness to participate in study skills and self-improvement classes; the need to improve their basic reading, writing, and math skills; a satisfaction with grading and attendance policies; a preference for a variety of audio-visual materials; and a lack of interest in extra-curricular activities.

Similarly, Hameister and Hickey (1977) have indicated that the

adult student typically manifests: (a) a learning history strongly influenced by informal education, (b) frequent deficiencies in study and communication skills, (c) considerable relevant work experience, (d) an unfamiliarity with educational routine and expectations, (e) a major commitment to family and job, (f) a macro-frame of reference for processing new information, and (g) a hiatus from formal education with concomitant poor ability to judge academic potential.

A composite of those studies which have compared younger and older college students has been aptly provided by Lenning and Hanson (1977):

Younger students have major problems of motivation, relationships with peers, learning to make decisions, knowing what they want for their lives. Conversely, older students generally have a harder time adjusting to new situations, have feelings of inadequacy about having been out of school so long, have more family responsibilities and other outside pressures, are more often working fulltime in addition to attending college. Older students are more positive about different aspects of their college and about their experiences there. Many of them "thrive" on the more traditional teaching methodologies that younger students tend to reject. (p. 285)

Although re-entry adults are a highly diverse group, "in the aggregate, little is available about how the backgrounds of these students differ among themselves" (Munday, 1976, p. 682). Accordingly, studies have been undertaken to refine the knowledge base by focusing on intra-group differences related to various characteristics of types of older students.

Roelfs (1975), for example, found that veterans were more likely than older older students to want student-oriented rather than traditional instruction, to associate with other students, and to participate in extracurricular activities. She hypothesized that this may have resulted from their having "grown accustomed to group learning and living situations in military service" (p. 3).

Sex differences have also been investigated. Swinburne (1970) found that males carried heavier course loads, received more outside incentives, and were more concerned with improving occupational status than females. In addressing the unique needs of women returning to school, Brandenburg (1974) concluded that women, to a greater degree than men, need to deal with the resistance encountered through modification of lifestyle, need assertiveness training to bolster their self-worth, need increased consideration in financial aid, need remediation in basic academic skills, and need reassurance that projected career changes are realistic.

Astin (1976) has conducted the most extensive survey to date of women in institutions of higher education. Personal variables cited as problems encountered in re-entry included: lack of time; lack of specific skills/abilities; job responsibilities; family obligations; guilt about neglect of children; lack of direction/purpose; and lack of self-confidence. Frequently recommended program changes included: provide child care, financial aid, and lower tuition; reach and enroll a wider population; increase publicity; evaluate courses and services and follow-up on participants; move locations; allow greater variety and choice of time for courses; make counseling responsive to individual needs and differences; provide better occupational and educational information job placement; and increase staffing of various programs.

In a recent comprehensive review, Tittle and Denker (1977) noted several implications for research and concluded:

To date, there has not been an extensive commitment to this new population for post-secondary education. As a result, we find little systematic research and evaluation of programs and supportive services in the higher education setting. (p. 575)

In sum, this brief overview represents a sampling of research on re-entry adult students. To enhance institutional responsiveness, to broaden the current knowledge base, and to operationalize the concept of lifelong learning, empirical approaches are required which will systematically assess the needs of these non-traditional students.

Method

Selection of Participating Two-Year Colleges

From the pool of 57 New York State two-year colleges with eligibility to receive vocational education funding, six colleges (approximately 11% of the population) representing diverse urban, suburban, and rural criteria, were selected to participate in the study. These colleges included:

Columbia-Greene Community College

Farmingdale Agricultural and Technical College

Jamestown Community College

Jefferson Community College

Monroe Community College

New York City Community College

Initially, the Center Director contacted each college's president and invited participation in the study. The Project Director then sent a follow-up letter to each president describing the project and requesting the formation of a steering committee.

It was recommended that the steering committee consist of: (1) a faculty chairperson, (2) a Dean of Instruction, (3) a Dean of Students, and (4) selected faculty from Business and from either Health Services or Trade/Technology.

An initial meeting with the Project Director and/or the Assistant Project Director was held at each of the six participating institutions.

Each steering committee was provided with an overview of the project's activities and was requested (1) to react to the *Survey of Student Needs*, the instrument to be used in the needs assessment, (2) to develop a plan for administering the survey on campus, and (3) to inventory available campus and community resources according to the needs of re-entry adults.

The Survey Instrument

The *Survey of Student Needs* (Appendix 1) was developed with input from two-year college personnel, with recommendations by professionals in the field of educational measurement, and with information gleaned from a literature review in conjunction with an examination of survey instruments used in other needs assessments.

Following a pretesting of the items, the original form was modified to its final version which consists of 75 items tapping the following five conceptual categories or "facets" of a student's college experience (Table 1 presents item-facet membership data):

Academic Survival Skills: basic tools of academic competence;

Personal Development: personal-social skills, generalizable to a variety of situations, not typically regarded as curriculum determinants;

Instructional Patterns: instructional policies, practices, and attitudes that affect a student's academic performance;

Institutional Curricular Services: administrative procedures that establish the institutional context;

Institutional Support Services: institutional services that remediate, maintain, or enhance a student's educational experience.

The *Survey of Student Needs* was then pilot tested on 242 students attending Fulton-Montgomery Community College (Johnstown, New York). These data were presented at the annual meeting of the New England Educational

Table 1

Item-Facet Membership

Facet	Item ^a
Academic Survival Skills	8,16,27,39,41,48,56,58,62,63
Personal Development	7,11,19,21,24,26,29,34,35,38,42,44,51,52, 53,54,59,67,70,72
Instructional Patterns	4,5,13,28,30,32,33,36,45,46,49,55,64,66, 71,74,75
Institutional Curricular Services	3,9,10,12,14,20,23,40,43,50,65,69
Institutional Support Services	1,2,6,15,17,18,22,25,31,37,47,57,60,61, 68,73

^aConsult survey for item content.

Research Organization (Corrado & Mangano, 1978), thereby providing the staff with additional opportunities for feedback from colleagues.

Various computations have yielded information regarding the resultant survey instrument. The average completion time for two-year college students was 15 minutes. The average readability level (Gunning Formula, 1952) has been computed at 7.5. The *Survey of Student Needs* has a coefficient of internal consistency (coefficient alpha, a measure of scale reliability) of .95; the coefficients of the five facets range from .72 to .92.

The Sample

During the spring semester (1978), representative student and faculty groups in the business, health services, and trade/technology curricula at the participating institutions were administered the *Survey of Student Needs* using both mail and on-campus data collection techniques. The student sample included the following subgroups:

1. Traditional College Students (TCS) defined as two-year college students, age 24 or younger, currently enrolled in at least one credit course in the occupational education curricula.
2. Re-Entry Adult Students (RAS) defined as two-year college students, age 25 or older, currently enrolled in at least one credit course in the occupational education curricula.
3. Re-Entry Adult Leavers (RAL) defined as two-year college students, age 25 or older, not currently enrolled, who had received I, W, NC (or comparable grade) in at least one credit course in the occupational education curricula during their last semester in attendance.

Usable surveys were obtained from 1177 students (43.5% response rate) and 66 faculty/staff (44% response rate).

Table 2 provides student demographic data. As indicated, the members of the TCS group were typically single, matriculated, full-time students, enrolled in day classes, with a hiatus from formal education of one year or less. The majority (79.4% males, 70.4% females) had been attending their respective colleges for more than two semesters.

Table 2

Student Characteristics

Percentage Indicating Each Response

Item	Group					
	TCS		RAS		RAL	
	M (N=263)	F (N=298)	M (N=279)	F (N=250)	M (N=36)	F (N=51)
3. Marital status						
a. Single	93.1	90.3	19.8	22.0	52.8	49.0
b. Married	6.9	8.7	73.0	55.2	41.7	27.5
c. Other	0.0	1.0	7.2	22.8	5.6	23.5
4. Employment						
a. Not employed	66.4	43.0	14.1	37.3	38.9	34.0
b. Employed part-time	41.4	39.6	7.6	13.3	19.4	30.0
c. Employed full-time	22.2	17.4	78.3	49.4	41.7	36.0
5. Time since last course						
a. 1 year ago or less	79.1	70.6	19.7	15.7	33.3	39.2
b. 2 - 4	18.3	25.7	23.7	18.5	22.2	23.5
c. 5 or more	2.7	3.7	56.6	55.9	44.4	37.3
6. Matriculated						
a. Yes	84.2	86.3	71.1	79.4	63.9	68.0
b. No	15.8	13.7	28.9	20.6	36.1	32.0
7. Credits						
<u>Part-time status</u>	28.8	33.3	79.5	78.8	58.3	66.7
a. 5 or fewer	9.6	9.1	25.4	23.6	22.2	27.5
b. 6 - 11	19.2	24.2	54.1	55.2	36.1	39.2
<u>Full-time status</u>						
c. 12 or more	71.3	66.7	20.4	21.2	41.7	33.3
8. Semesters at college						
a. First	8.4	9.1	10.8	7.6	22.2	29.4
b. 2 - 4	79.4	70.4	50.2	47.2	47.2	51.0
c. 5 or more	12.2	20.5	39.1	45.2	30.6	19.6
9. Classes						
a. Day	63.3	50.5	11.1	17.6	36.1	47.1
b. Evening	18.8	23.6	79.2	67.6	27.8	33.3
c. Both	18.0	25.9	9.7	14.8	36.1	19.6
10. Academic Major						
a. Business	57.1	70.1	57.1	47.0	43.3	72.1
b. Health Services	2.8	20.4	5.0	41.5	0.0	4.7
c. Trade/Technology	40.1	9.5	37.8	11.4	56.7	23.3

Table 3

Faculty Characteristics

Percentage Indicating Each Response

Item	M (N=44)	F (N=22)
3. Highest degree		
a. Associates	2.3	18.2
b. Bachelors	9.1	13.6
c. Masters	65.9	59.1
d. Doctorate	20.5	9.1
e. Other	2.3	0.0
4. Employment		
a. Employed part-time	13.6	27.3
b. Employed full-time	86.4	72.7
5. Primary Employment Function		
a. Administrator	22.7	18.2
b. Counselor	13.6	31.8
c. Teaching Faculty	54.5	36.4
d. Other	9.1	13.6
6. Major discipline area		
a. Business	30.2	23.8
b. Health Service	2.3	19.0
c. Trade/Technology	11.6	4.8
d. Other	55.8	52.4
7. Employment		
a. Day	40.9	54.5
b. Evening	6.8	13.6
c. Both	52.3	31.8
8. Interaction with adult students		
a. 0 - 25%	53.5	38.1
b. 26 - 50%	30.2	42.9
c. 51 - 75%	7.0	14.3
d. 76 - 100%	9.3	4.8
9. Consecutive years of employment		
a. 5 years or less	36.4	61.9
b. 6 - 10 years	40.9	33.3
c. 11 years or more	22.7	4.8

In contrast to the TCS, over two-thirds of the RAS group were part-time students, attending evening classes, with a break in formal education of five years or more. The majority of these students were married and were employed full-time.

The typical profile of the RAL contained components of the other student groups. As students, they had attended day classes on a part-time basis, and had been away from formal education for five years or more.

Business was most frequently cited as the major field of study by all student groups.

Table 3 presents faculty/staff demographic data. The majority had Master's Degrees, were employed full-time as teaching faculty, and indicated between 0 - 50% interaction with adult students. Many more males than females had been employed full-time, for longer periods of time, by their respective institutions.

Data Analysis

To test group differences, analyses were performed at both the item and category levels. Frequency and percentage tabulations, means, standard deviations, rankings, and significance levels were computed for relevant variables.

Results

Objective #1: Needs Assessment

To facilitate discussion of the findings, data have been arranged in simplified format (Table 4). Chi-square analyses ($df=4$) were performed on the items for each of the following group comparisons (Letters indicate column headings):

Table 4

Items With Significant Chi-Square Values Between Groups

Item (Modified)	N=	Higher Rating Group				
		TCS-RAS	RAS-RAL	F/S-RAS	RAS	
		561 529	529 87	66 529	PRT-FUL	M-F
					419 110	279 250
		(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
1. A place to study on campus.....	TCS		RAL	F/S	FUL	
2. Bus service to the campus.....	TCS		RAL	F/S	FUL	F
3. Independent study.....	RAS			F/S		
4. Instructors are personally interested...						F
5. A-V materials in course.....			RAL			
6. Preregistration.....	RAS			RAS		F
7. Learning to organize time better.....	TCS			F/S		
8. Improving study skills.....						
9. Evening classes.....	RAS		RAL	F/S	PRT	M
10. Dropping course without penalty.....	TCS		RAL	F/S	FUL	
11. Studying with other students.....	TCS		RAL	F/S	FUL	
12. Pass-Fail grading.....				F/S		
13. Instructors have realistic view.....						F
14. Taking a variety of courses.....				F/S		
15. Campus tour.....	TCS		RAL	F/S	FUL	
16. Learning to prepare better term papers..	TCS		RAL	F/S	FUL	
17. Tutoring services.....	TCS		RAL	F/S	FUL	
18. Occupational counseling.....				F/S	FUL	F
19. Encouragement from family.....						F
20. Courses providing specific job skills...						
21. Working with other students.....	TCS		RAL	RAS	FUL	
22. Speedy registration procedures.....	RAS			RAS		F
23. Credit for out-of-college experiences...	RAS				FUL	
24. Improving concentration.....				RAS		
25. Financial aid.....	TCS		RAL	F/S	FUL	
26. "Fitting in" with other students.....	TCS			F/S	FUL	
27. Improving note-taking skills.....	TCS			F/S		
28. Instructors use many examples.....						
29. Learning to cope with failure.....	TCS			F/S		
30. Instructors provide alternatives.....	TCS		RAL	RAS	FUL	F
31. Extracurricular activities.....	TCS		RAL	F/S	FUL	
32. Taking "re-tests" to improve grade.....	TCS		RAL	RAS	FUL	F
33. Instructors modify course outline.....	TCS			RAS		
34. Improving social interactions.....	TCS			F/S	FUL	
35. A place to study at home.....				F/S		F
36. Instructors are relaxed and informal....				RAS		
37. Evening and weekend registration.....	RAS			F/S	PRT	

Table 4 (cont'd)

Items With Significant Chi-Square Values Between Groups

Item (Modified)	N=	Higher Rating Group					
		TCS-RAS		RAS-RAL		F/S-RAS	
		561	529	529	87	66	529
		RAS		PRT-FUL		M-F	
		419	110	279	250		
		(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	
38. Improving memory.....				RAS		F	
39. Learning to give better oral reports....			RAL	RAS			
40. Weekend classes.....	RAS		RAL	F/S		F	
41. Improving writing skills.....				F/S	FUL		
42. "Keeping up" with other students.....	TCS		RAL	F/S			
43. Off-campus courses.....				F/S			
44. Getting "A"s and "B"s in courses.....	TCS			RAS		F	
45. Instructors let students design course..	TCS			RAS			
46. Discussion classes.....	TCS				FUL		
47. Child care facilities on campus.....				F/S	FUL	F	
48. Improving vocabulary skills.....	RAS			F/S			
49. Encouragement from instructors.....						F	
50. Summer classes.....	RAS			F/S			
51. Learning to set better goals.....	TCS			RAS			
52. Improving motivation for college work...	TCS		RAL	RAS	FUL		
53. Reducing uneasiness.....	TCS		RAL	F/S			
54. Age-mates in classes.....	TCS			F/S			
55. Instructors follow course outline.....				F/S	FUL	F	
56. Improving reading skills.....	TCS			F/S		F	
57. Job placement services.....	TCS		RAL	F/S	FUL	F	
58. Improving test-taking skills.....	TCS			F/S	FUL	F	
59. Setting aside time to study.....			RAL	F/S	FUL	F	
60. Campus activities for students.....	TCS		RAL	F/S	FUL		
61. Academic counseling.....				F/S	FUL	F	
62. Improving math skills.....	RAS				FUL	F	
63. Learning to use library facilities.....	TCS						
64. Grades based on several activities.....	TCS		RAL	RAS	FUL		
65. Flexible attendance requirements.....	TCS			RAS			
66. Lecture classes.....	RAS			RAS	FUL		
67. Getting together with other students....	TCS			F/S	FUL		
68. Campus snack bar.....	TCS			F/S	FUL		
69. Three hour classes.....	RAS			F/S	PRT		
70. Improving self-confidence.....	TCS			F/S		F	
71. Knowledge of class standing.....	TCS			F/S	FUL		
72. Acquiring broad educational background..				RAS		F	
73. Counseling for personal problems.....	TCS		RAL	F/S	FUL		
74. Course objectives to guide study.....				F/S	FUL	F	
75. Courses with several source materials...	TCS				FUL		

- A. Traditional College Students (TCS) vs Re-Entry Adult Students (RAS)
- B. Re-Entry Adult Students (RAS) vs Re-Entry Adult Leavers (RAL)
- C. Faculty-staff (F/S) vs Re-Entry Adult Students (RAS)
- D. Re-Entry Adult Student Subgroups: Part-Time Adult Students (PRT) vs Full-Time Adult Students (FUL)
- E. Re-Entry Adult Student Subgroups: Males (M) vs Females (F)

The items with significant² between group values³ contain column entries indicating the group with the higher mean rating. Items without column entries did not significantly differentiate the groups, that is, these items received comparable ratings from both groups. To determine the strength of these ratings (high or low), consult the item means presented in Table 5.

Observed group comparisons included:

A. TCS-RAS: Twelve of the 51 items that significantly differentiated the younger (17-24 years) TCS group from the older (25+ years) RAS group were given higher ratings by the older students. These items included: preregistration as well as speedy registration procedures; evening, weekend and summer classes and registration; credit for out-of-college experiences; and independent study courses. Re-entry adults exhibited a statistically significant need for vocabulary and math skill improvement. The younger students indicated a greater need for extracurricular activities and for personal development. Both groups expressed high preference for memory, concentration, and study skill improvement; for relaxed, informal, encouraging instructors who have a realistic view of a student's responsibilities outside class, and who use many examples in their lectures; and for a broad educational

² All values are significant at $p < .05$ level; the majority are significant at $p < .01$ level.

³ The actual chi-square values are available from the authors.

background with many courses providing specific job skills.

B. RAS-RAL: With less than one-third of the items differentiating these groups, the need patterns were quite similar. However, the 24 items given higher ratings by the adult ex-students (RAL) were consistent with the younger TCS preferences. For example, both the TCS and the RAL groups (data from columns A and B) were interested in various student activities; in tutoring, counseling, and job placement services; and in opportunities to improve motivation and to reduce the uneasiness associated with college attendance.

C. F/S-RAS: Faculty/staff were surveyed as to their perceptions of re-entry adult student needs. In comparing the response configurations of the F/S and RAS groups, 62 of the 75 items achieved significant values. In general, the F/S group perceived the needs of re-entry adults as much more important than the adults themselves indicated, and this trend was consistent across all facets. However, of the 18 items given significantly higher ratings by the re-entry adults, eight were related to instructional patterns. In addition to flexible attendance requirements and lecture classes, adults expressed a preference for relaxed and informal instructors who provide alternative assignments and retests, who base final grades on several activities, and who modify course outlines to satisfy student interests. Improvement items of special concern to the re-entry adults included memory, concentration, and oral reporting.

D. RAS: PRT-FUL: This subgroup comparison yielded 38 items with significant values. The full-time re-entry adults' profile overlapped the younger TCS responses (data from columns A and D). Campus activities, personal development concerns, and the availability of remedial services were noted by both groups. In contrast, part-time older students expressed a greater need for longer class periods meeting evenings and weekends.

E. RAS: M-F: Twenty-five of the 26 items differentiating the sexes were given higher ratings by the females. They expressed greater need for encouragement and reassurance, for remedial and support services, and for academic survival skill improvement. These students also displayed more concern with grading policies, with course objectives and opportunities for alternative assignments, and with scheduling problems.

In sum, re-entry adults have important needs that are different from those of other student groups (Appendix 2 provides additional analyses of student responses to the open-ended question).

Objective #2: Taxonomy of Needs

To facilitate the implementation of the preceding findings, the RAS data (N = 529) have been organized into the *Need Taxonomy of Re-Entry Adult Two-Year College Students* (Table 5). This taxonomy represents a three-level ordering of needs ranking within the five facets.

The taxonomy was constructed in the following manner:

1. The 75 items were ranked according to mean values.
2. The top 25% (19 items) and the bottom 25% (19 items) of the ranked items were labeled "First Order" and "Third Order" respectively. The remaining 37 items were labeled "Second Order." This arrangement spotlighted high and low priority items on the need continuum and preserved the nature of the rating scale with the majority of items clustered around the midpoint of the overall survey (M = 3.38; SD = .58).
3. The items were nested in their appropriate facets; the facets were subsumed under the two domains of "Learner" and "Provider."
4. Means and standard deviations of the facets were computed.
5. Relative item ranking within facets across orders was displayed in matrix-form to facilitate institutional efforts in addressing the perceived needs of re-entry adult students in two-year colleges.

Table 5 (Fold-out)

Need Taxonomy of Re-Entry Adult Two-Year College Students

Note: This table provides the following data: Means (M) and standard deviations (SD) of facets; means, numbers (in parentheses), and content (verbatim) of items.

NEED TAXONOMY OF RE-ENTRY ADULT TWO-YEAR COLLEGE STUDENTS

DOMAIN	FACET	FIRST ORDER
LEARNER	ACADEMIC SURVIVAL SKILLS M = 3.58 SD = .92	• 4.06 (8) IMPROVING MY STUDY SKILLS
	PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT M = 3.36 SD = .71	• 4.26 (44) GETTING "A"s AND "B"s IN MY COURSES • 4.09 (35) A PLACE TO STUDY AT HOME • 4.04 (24) IMPROVING MY CONCENTRATION • 4.02 (33) IMPROVING MY MEMORY • 3.90 (72) ACQUIRING A BROAD EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND
	OTHERS	• 3.89 (19) ENCOURAGEMENT FROM MY FAMILY
PROVIDER	INSTRUCTIONAL PATTERNS M = 3.53 SD = .58	• 4.34 (4) INSTRUCTORS WHO ARE PERSONALLY INTERESTED IN MY PROGRESS • 4.04 (36) INSTRUCTORS WHO ARE RELAXED AND INFORMAL IN THE CLASSROOM • 4.01 (23) INSTRUCTORS WHO USE MANY EXAMPLES IN THEIR TEACHING • 4.00 (13) INSTRUCTORS WHO HAVE A REALISTIC VIEW OF MY RESPONSIBILITIES OUTSIDE CLASS • 3.96 (49) ENCOURAGEMENT FROM MY INSTRUCTORS • 3.92 (30) INSTRUCTORS WHO PROVIDE MORE THAN ONE WAY TO MEET COURSE REQUIREMENTS
	INSTITUTIONAL CURRICULAR SERVICES M = 3.42 SD = .62	• 4.58 (20) COURSES PROVIDING SPECIFIC SKILLS THAT WILL BE USEFUL ON A JOB • 4.41 (9) EVENING CLASSES • 4.07 (23) BEING ABLE TO OBTAIN CREDIT FOR OUT-OF-COLLEGE EXPERIENCES
	INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES M = 3.11 SD = .71	• 4.39 (22) SPEEDY REGISTRATION PROCEDURES • 3.95 (6) PREREGISTRATION • 3.89 (37) EVENING AND WEEKEND REGISTRATION

NEED TAXONOMY OF RE-ENTRY ADULT TWO-YEAR COLLEGE STUDENTS

DOMAIN	FACT	NEED CONTINUUM
		SECOND ORDER
LEARNER	ACADEMIC SURVIVAL SKILLS M = 3.58 SD = .92	• 3.85 (58) IMPROVING MY TEST-TAKING SKILLS • 3.63 (39) LEARNING TO GIVE BETTER ORAL REPORTS • 3.59 (48) IMPROVING MY VOCABULARY SKILLS • 3.59 (56) IMPROVING MY READING SKILLS • 3.56 (41) IMPROVING MY WRITING SKILLS • 3.55 (62) IMPROVING MY MATH SKILLS • 3.47 (16) LEARNING TO PREPARE BETTER TERM PAPERS • 3.46 (27) IMPROVING MY NOTE-TAKING SKILLS • 3.24 (63) LEARNING TO USE THE LIBRARY FACILITIES
	PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT M = 3.36 SD = .71	• 3.81 (7) LEARNING TO ORGANIZE MY TIME BETTER • 3.79 (51) LEARNING TO SET BETTER GOALS FOR MYSELF • 3.79 (59) SETTING ASIDE TIME EVERY DAY TO STUDY • 3.59 (52) IMPROVING MY MOTIVATION FOR COLLEGE WORK • 3.54 (70) IMPROVING MY SELF-CONFIDENCE • 3.19 (29) LEARNING TO COPE WITH FAILURE
	OTHERS	• 3.08 (21) WORKING WITH OTHER STUDENTS ON CLASS PROJECTS • 3.03 (42) "KEEPING UP" WITH OTHER STUDENTS • 2.96 (26) "FITTING IN" WITH OTHER STUDENTS
PROVIDER	INSTRUCTIONAL PATTERNS M = 3.55 SD = .53	• 3.86 (64) GRADES BASED ON PROJECTS, PAPERS, AND CLASS PARTICIPATION INSTEAD OF ON TESTS ALONE • 3.69 (33) INSTRUCTORS WHO MODIFY THE COURSE OUTLINE TO SATISFY STUDENT INTERESTS • 3.66 (74) COURSE OBJECTIVES TO GUIDE MY STUDY • 3.66 (5) THE USE OF FILMS, TAPES, AND OTHER AUDIO-VISUAL MATERIALS IN A COURSE • 3.48 (32) BEING ABLE TO TAKE "RE-TESTS" TO IMPROVE MY GRADE • 3.30 (46) COURSES WITH MANY CLASS DISCUSSIONS • 3.10 (75) COURSES USING MANY SOURCE MATERIALS INSTEAD OF SINGLE TEXTBOOKS • 3.02 (71) KNOWING HOW I'M DOING IN RELATION TO OTHERS IN CLASS
	INSTITUTIONAL CURRICULAR SERVICES M = 3.42 SD = .62	• 3.47 (50) SUMMER CLASSES • 3.43 (65) FLEXIBLE REQUIREMENTS FOR CLASS ATTENDANCE • 3.33 (69) THREE HOUR CLASSES THAT MEET ONCE EACH WEEK • 3.36 (14) BEING ABLE TO TAKE A VARIETY OF COURSES BEFORE DECIDING ON A MAJOR FIELD • 3.34 (3) BEING ABLE TO TAKE A COURSE AS AN INDEPENDENT STUDY • 3.31 (10) BEING ABLE TO DROP A COURSE AT ANY TIME WITHOUT RECEIVING A PENALTY GRADE
	INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES M = 3.11 SD = .71	• 3.71 (61) BEING ABLE TO GET ACADEMIC COUNSELING • 3.67 (57) JOB PLACEMENT SERVICES • 3.64 (18) BEING ABLE TO GET OCCUPATIONAL COUNSELING • 3.57 (25) FINANCIAL AID • 3.01 (1) A PLACE TO STUDY ON CAMPUS

NEED TAXONOMY OF RE-ENTRY ADULT TWO-YEAR COLLEGE STUDENTS

DOMAIN	FACET	THIRD ORDER
LEARNER	ACADEMIC SURVIVAL SKILLS M = 3.58 SD = .92	
	SELF PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT M = 3.36 SD = .71	● 2.67 (53) REDUCING MY UNEASINESS ABOUT GOING TO COLLEGE
	OTHERS	● 2.81 (34) IMPROVING MY SOCIAL INTERACTIONS WITH OTHER STUDENTS ● 2.66 (11) STUDYING WITH OTHER STUDENTS ● 2.31 (67) GETTING TOGETHER WITH OTHER STUDENTS AFTER CLASS ● 2.20 (54) STUDENTS MY OWN AGE IN MY CLASSES
PROVIDER	INSTRUCTIONAL PATTERNS M = 3.53 SD = .53	● 2.93 (55) INSTRUCTORS WHO FOLLOW THE COURSE OUTLINE VERY CLOSELY ● 2.83 (66) COURSES IN WHICH THE INSTRUCTOR LECTURES MOST OF THE TIME ● 2.51 (45) INSTRUCTORS WHO LET STUDENTS DECIDE WHAT SHOULD BE COVERED IN A COURSE
	INSTITUTIONAL CURRICULAR SERVICES M = 3.42 SD = .62	● 2.80 (43) OFF-CAMPUS COURSES ● 2.68 (40) WEEKEND CLASSES ● 2.56 (12) BEING ABLE TO TAKE A COURSE WITH "PASS-FAIL" GRADING INSTEAD OF "A TO F" GRADING
	INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES M = 3.11 SD = .71	● 2.91 (17) TUTORING SERVICES ● 2.78 (73) BEING ABLE TO GET COUNSELING FOR PERSONAL PROBLEMS ● 2.78 (68) A CAMPUS SNACK BAR OPEN DURING ALL CLASS HOURS ● 2.63 (60) CAMPUS ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS WITH INTERESTS SIMILAR TO MINE ● 2.53 (15) A CAMPUS TOUR DURING MY FIRST SEMESTER ● 2.50 (31) EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES ● 2.32 (47) CHILD CARE FACILITIES ON CAMPUS ● 2.03 (2) BUS SERVICE TO THE CAMPUS

Objective #3: Resource Inventory

The *Survey of Resources for Adult Students* indicates the colleges' perceptions of services available for adult students. As noted in Table 6, five of the six colleges responded to this survey.

All responding colleges reported offering services to Veterans, and indicated that the hours of the cafeteria, bookstore, and library included times convenient for part-time students.

Admission and Registration Services were reported to have high availability, as were contacts with community organizations, including mental health, vocational rehabilitation, and employment services.

The survey indicated Financial Aid information and counselors were available and three colleges reported offering these services during weekends and evenings. While all the colleges indicated a wide variety of credit and non-credit courses, only two stated they offered life experience credit.

Counseling and Remedial/Developmental Services were reported to have an average availability at the five colleges. All five indicated Counseling Service for adults were available and publicized; however only two colleges reported having adult support groups and only one stated adult peer counseling was available.

Family Services and Peer Support Services were rated very low in availability. Only one college in five reported offering an adult student's organization, meeting place or newsletter. The survey indicated child care services were not available at any of the five colleges in the evening. Orientation Services also were reported to have low availability; only two colleges stated they provided orientation specifically for the returning adult and a single college encouraged spouse participation in orientation.

Table 6

Survey of Resources for Adult Students

NAME OF INSTITUTION COMPOSITE

Availability of resources

	YES	NO	DEVELOPMENT OF RESOURCE ANTICIPATED
ADMISSION AND REGISTRATION			
Student's life experience evaluated for credit	2	2	1
Registration held during hours convenient to part-time adults. (evenings and weekends)	5		
Wide selection of credit courses available weekends and evenings.	5		
Wide selection of noncredit courses available weekends and evenings.	4	1	
FINANCIAL AID			
Adult students are specifically informed of, and encouraged to seek financial aid.	4		1
At least one financial aid counselor is trained to deal with adult concerns.	5		
Services are offered at times convenient to part-time adults. (evenings and weekends)	3	1	1
ORIENTATION			
Specific orientation program designed for reentering adults.	2	1	2
Spouse participation encouraged in orientation.	1	3	1
REMEDIAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES			
Adult participation encouraged in study skills seminars and learning labs.	4	1	
Services are offered at times convenient to part-time adults. (evenings and weekends)	5		
Diagnostic testing is provided to all returning adults.	2	3	
Adult tutors are available.	3	2	

Table 6 (cond't)

Survey of Resources for Adult Students

Availability of Resources

	YES	NO	DEVELOPMENT OF RESOURCE ANTICIPATED
PEER SUPPORT SERVICES			
There is an adult students' organization.	1	3	1
Designated gathering place available for adults.	1	4	
Adult student newsletter published on campus.	1	4	
FAMILY SERVICES			
Child care available:			
daytime hours	3	2	
evening hours		5	
on campus	2	3	
off campus	1	4	
to both male and female students	3	2	
PLACEMENT SERVICE			
Professional staff available who are experienced with mid-life career changes.	4	1	
Placement service available to spouse.	1	4	
Service available at hours convenient to part-time students. (evenings and weekends)	3	1	1
STUDENT ACTIVITIES			
Intramural programs designed for adults.	1	4	
Recreation and entertainment planned with adult interests in mind.	4	1	
VETERANS AFFAIRS			
One or more staff members designated to work with veterans.	5		
Staff members for veterans affairs available at hours convenient to part-time students.	5		
COUNSELING			
Professional counselor available who is experienced in helping adults.	5		
Adult peer counselors available.	1	3	1
Adult support groups available.	2	2	1
Student family counseling available.	3	2	
Adult support groups available.	3	2	
Services are publicized for adults.	5		
Services available at hours convenient to part-time students. (evenings and weekends)	5		

Table 6 (cond't)

Survey of Resources for Adult Students

Availability of resources

LIBRARY

Help available in learning to use library facilities.

Library open during hours convenient to part-time students. (evenings and weekends)

MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES

Cafeteria open during hours convenient to part-time students. (evenings and weekends)

Bookstore open during hours convenient to part-time students. (evenings and weekends)

COMMUNITY CONTACTS

College maintains contact with community organizations that serve adults, including;

Child care

Legal services

Mental health

Veterans Administration

Vocational Rehabilitation

Labor unions

Employment services

Employers

Public schools

YES	NO	DEVELOPMENT OF RESOURCE ANTICIPATED
5		
5		
5		
5		
3	2	
3	2	
4	1	
5		
5		
3	2	
5		
5		
5		

Implications

The taxonomy may be used to plan program and services, and to change policies and procedures for the re-entry adult student. For planning purposes the taxonomy should be read vertically rather than horizontally. Specifically, high priority needs in all facets should be considered first. Concerted efforts should be made to plan for all facets within both domains simultaneously; integration should characterize the plans generated using the taxonomy second wave planning, like initial planning should also follow an integrated vertical approach.

Emphasis should be placed on needs which may be satisfied through academic programming, instructional methods and administrative policies and procedures. Needs which are only indirectly served by program should be satisfied simultaneously. In fact the satisfaction of these needs may be an indication of the success of the programming effort.

Subgroup differences

Re-entry adults are a highly diverse group. Subgroups within this population exhibit unique needs. Planning should address the needs of specific subgroups included in the population labeled re-entry adults.

Faculty and Staff Development

To enhance instructional patterns increased opportunities for faculty/staff development programs should be provided. Increased effort should be extended to recruit adjunct faculty into these activities since in many cases adult students are served by part-time faculty. These staff development activities should stress the importance of the perceived needs of the re-entry student and should aim to develop a greater sensitivity to the out of school responsibilities of this group as well as to the methodology implications expressed in the facet of the taxonomy.

Administration

Colleges should strive to dispel the image of the institution as one serving the needs of adolescents and replace it with an image which acknowledges the importance of lifelong learning. Recruitment and registration procedures should be reviewed to assess their appropriateness for adults. Registration should be scheduled at times convenient for adults and procedures should be instituted so that registration can be accomplished in a minimum time. The opportunity to preregister should be made available. Other policy decisions which are indicated include providing a variety of evening, weekend and summer courses; credit for out-of-college experiences; and independent study courses. Other institutional resources such as library, cafeteria, and bookstore hours should be reviewed and rescheduled where they are not available to adults attending part-time.

Financial Support

Examine current policies regarding tuition waivers and special loan practices in light of the increasing enrollment of re-entry adults. Here too the hours of the financial aid office and the business office should be reviewed and rescheduled where indicated.

Counseling

Assess the appropriateness of existing counseling services with respect to the unique needs of re-entry adults. Increased emphasis should be given to orientation services, these should include opportunity to include family members to marshall family support where appropriate. An evaluation of the availability of academic, occupational and personal counseling services at times when most adults are on campus. The institution of peer counseling should be strongly considered where not available.

Re-entry adults have important perceived needs that are different from those of younger students. The suggestions offered in this section are not exhaustive. Institutional administration, faculty, and support service personnel are encouraged to draw inferences from the data which are specific to their own colleges.

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APPENDIX 1

SURVEY OF STUDENT NEEDS

1 - 4

Two-Year College Development Center
State University of New York at Albany
135 Western Avenue
Albany, New York 12222

PART 1 - CURRENT STATUS

Directions: Please check (☒) the information requested.

1. Sex:
(1) ☐ Male (2) ☐ Female (5)
2. Age:
(1) ☐ 24 or younger (4) ☐ 45 - 54 (6)
(2) ☐ 25 - 34 (5) ☐ 55 - 64
(3) ☐ 35 - 44 (6) ☐ 65 or older
3. Marital Status:
(1) ☐ Single (7)
(2) ☐ Married
(3) ☐ Widowed, divorced, or separated
4. Employment:
(1) ☐ Not employed (8)
(2) ☐ Employed part-time
(3) ☐ Employed full-time
5. Before attending this college, when did you last take a course in either high school or college?
(1) ☐ 1 year ago or less (9)
(2) ☐ 2 - 4 years ago
(3) ☐ 5 years ago or more
6. Are you currently enrolled in a degree program (matriculated)?
(1) ☐ Yes (2) ☐ No (10)
7. How many credits are you taking this semester?
(1) ☐ 5 or fewer (11)
(2) ☐ 6 - 11
(3) ☐ 12 or more
8. How many semesters have you attended this college?
(1) ☐ This is my first semester (12)
(2) ☐ 2 - 4
(3) ☐ 5 or more
9. When do you attend classes?
(1) ☐ Day (13)
(2) ☐ Evening
(3) ☐ Both day and evening
10. What is your major field of study?
(1) ☐ Business (3) ☐ Trade/Technology (14)
(2) ☐ Health Service (4) ☐ Other (Specify) _____

Directions: The following items represent needs for some college students. Please indicate HOW IMPORTANT EACH ITEM IS FOR YOU as a student attending two-year college. Respond to each item ONLY AS IT APPLIES TO YOU by circling one choice according to these rating categories:

- 1 = Of No Importance
- 2 = Of Low Importance
- 3 = Of Medium Importance
- 4 = Of High Importance
- 5 = Of Very High Importance

Example:

Being alive..... 1 2 3 4 5

Item:

- | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|------|
| 1. A place to study on campus..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | (15) |
| 2. Bus service to the campus..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | (16) |
| 3. Being able to take a course as an independent study..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | (17) |
| 4. Instructors who are personally interested in my progress | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | (18) |
| 5. The use of films, tapes, and other audio-visual materials in a course..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | (19) |
| 6. Preregistration..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | (20) |
| 7. Learning to organize my time better..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | (21) |
| 8. Improving my study skills..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | (22) |
| 9. Evening classes..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | (23) |
| 10. Being able to drop a course at any time without receiving a penalty grade..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | (24) |
| 11. Studying with other students..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | (25) |
| 12. Being able to take a course with "pass-fail" grading instead of "A to F" grading..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | (26) |
| 13. Instructors who have a realistic view of my responsibilities outside class..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | (27) |
| 14. Being able to take a variety of courses before deciding on a major field of study..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | (28) |

- 1 = Of No Importance
 2 = Of Low Importance
 3 = Of Medium Importance
 4 = Of High Importance
 5 = Of Very High Importance

15. A campus tour during my first semester.....	1	2	3	4	5	(29)
16. Learning to prepare better term papers.....	1	2	3	4	5	(30)
17. Tutoring services.....	1	2	3	4	5	(31)
18. Being able to get occupational counseling.....	1	2	3	4	5	(32)
19. Encouragement from my family.....	1	2	3	4	5	(33)
20. Courses providing specific skills that will be useful on a job.....	1	2	3	4	5	(34)
21. Working with other students on class projects.....	1	2	3	4	5	(35)
22. Speedy registration procedures.....	1	2	3	4	5	(36)
23. Being able to obtain credit for out-of-college experiences.....	1	2	3	4	5	(37)
24. Improving my concentration.....	1	2	3	4	5	(38)
25. Financial aid.....	1	2	3	4	5	(39)
26. "Fitting in" with other students.....	1	2	3	4	5	(40)
27. Improving my note-taking skills.....	1	2	3	4	5	(41)
28. Instructors who use many examples in their teaching.....	1	2	3	4	5	(42)
29. Learning to cope with failure.....	1	2	3	4	5	(43)
30. Instructors who provide more than one way to meet course requirements.....	1	2	3	4	5	(44)
31. Extracurricular activities.....	1	2	3	4	5	(45)
32. Being able to take "re-tests" to improve my grade.....	1	2	3	4	5	(46)
33. Instructors who modify the course outline to satisfy student interests.....	1	2	3	4	5	(47)
34. Improving my social interactions with other students....	1	2	3	4	5	(48)

1 = Of No Importance
 2 = Of Low Importance
 3 = Of Medium Importance
 4 = Of High Importance
 5 = Of Very High Importance

35. A place to study at home.....	1	2	3	4	5	(49)
36. Instructors who are relaxed and informal in the classroom.....	1	2	3	4	5	(50)
37. Evening and weekend registration.....	1	2	3	4	5	(51)
38. Improving my memory.....	1	2	3	4	5	(52)
39. Learning to give better oral reports.....	1	2	3	4	5	(53)
40. Weekend classes.....	1	2	3	4	5	(54)
41. Improving my writing skills.....	1	2	3	4	5	(55)
42. "Keeping up" with other students in class.....	1	2	3	4	5	(56)
43. Off-campus courses.....	1	2	3	4	5	(57)
44. Getting "A's" and "B's" in my courses.....	1	2	3	4	5	(58)
45. Instructors who let students decide what should be covered in a course.....	1	2	3	4	5	(59)
46. Courses with many class discussions.....	1	2	3	4	5	(60)
47. Child care facilities on campus.....	1	2	3	4	5	(61)
48. Improving my vocabulary skills.....	1	2	3	4	5	(62)
49. Encouragement from my instructors.....	1	2	3	4	5	(63)
50. Summer classes.....	1	2	3	4	5	(64)
51. Learning to set better goals for myself.....	1	2	3	4	5	(65)
52. Improving my motivation for college work.....	1	2	3	4	5	(66)
53. Reducing my uneasiness about going to college.....	1	2	3	4	5	(67)
54. Students my own age in my classes.....	1	2	3	4	5	(68)
55. Instructors who follow the course outline very closely..	1	2	3	4	5	(69)
56. Improving my reading skills.....	1	2	3	4	5	(70)

- 1 = Of No Importance
 2 = Of Low Importance
 3 = Of Medium Importance
 4 = Of High Importance
 5 = Of Very High Importance

57. Job placement services.....	1	2	3	4	5	(71)
58. Improving my test-taking skills.....	1	2	3	4	5	(72)
59. Setting aside time every day to study.....	1	2	3	4	5	(73)
60. Campus activities for students with interests similar to mine.....	1	2	3	4	5	(74)
61. Being able to get academic counseling.....	1	2	3	4	5	(75)
62. Improving my math skills.....	1	2	3	4	5	(76)
63. Learning to use the library facilities.....	1	2	3	4	5	(77)
64. Grades based on projects, papers, and class participation instead of on tests alone.....	1	2	3	4	5	(78)
65. Flexible requirements for class attendance.....	1	2	3	4	5	(79)
66. Courses in which the instructor lectures most of the time.....	1	2	3	4	5	(80)
67. Getting together with other students after class.....	1	2	3	4	5	(5)
68. A campus snack bar open during all class hours.....	1	2	3	4	5	(6)
69. Three hour classes that meet once each week.....	1	2	3	4	5	(7)
70. Improving my self-confidence.....	1	2	3	4	5	(8)
71. Knowing how I'm doing in relation to others in class....	1	2	3	4	5	(9)
72. Acquiring a broad educational background.....	1	2	3	4	5	(10)
73. Being able to get counseling for personal problems.....	1	2	3	4	5	(11)
74. Course objectives to guide my study.....	1	2	3	4	5	(12)
75. Courses using many source materials instead of single textbooks.....	1	2	3	4	5	(13)

Please feel free to add any written comments. Thank you for your help.

APPENDIX 2

WHAT THEY SAID: THE OPEN-ENDED QUESTION

Suzanne M. Kaier
Jane C. Frank

The open-ended question gives the respondent freedom to add comments on any area. Relatively few responses were received. Those received were classified as either positive or negative and grouped according to facet: academic, personal, instructional, curricular, support services, or other. In general, respondents repeated or reinforced the areas covered in the survey. Comments on topics not in the questionnaire usually related to a particular instructor, or specific program or major. Although predominantly negative, the comments were often followed by suggestions. Urban institutions received a greater proportion of negative comments than smaller, suburban schools.

Although positive comments were few, they were made on every facet. Several were related to personal development and social aspects of college. One traditional college student commented that two-year schools made it "easier to meet people--especially other students." The quality of instruction and friendliness of instructors were also favorably mentioned. One re-entry adult student said:

I have found a great deal of pleasure going to this community college. If I were to pin it down to a single factor it would probably be the rapport attained through smaller classes and excellent instructors.

Many students recommended changes in instructional, curricular, and support services, based on concepts presented in the survey.

Attendance policies were frequently cited as an area of concern:

I'm 29 years old and a single parent. I don't have 24 hours a day to study. I do not like to be chided if I miss a class, although I feel it is my responsibility to make up the work I missed;

also,

I should be allowed to come to as many or as few classes as I want. The instructor should be there to help in occasional absences. There are many reasons why classes have to be missed.

Comments about the quality and attitude of instructors were frequent. One re-entry adult student wrote: "College level instructors should treat students as adults and act like professionals." Other students expressed similar dissatisfaction: "The majority of teachers forget that the students pay their salaries. We've hired them to teach us!" and "Unfortunately, teachers don't go to school to learn how to teach."

Several students' comments favored grading based on several criteria. One comment expressed this idea:

Instructors should grade students on class participation, projects, and term papers, not just a lousy final exam.

Recommendations related to support services were numerous. Of primary concern was the availability of day services for evening students. One student asked, "How about giving evening students the same advantages and opportunities as day students?" Specific services mentioned were placement, counseling and physical education facilities.

Evening students should have more offices open to them during the evenings for personal counseling and other help they might need.

Suggestions were also made concerning Career Planning and Placement ("Colleges should put more emphasis today on job opportunities and placement"), academic advising ("More advice on what the requirements and options are"), and financial aids ("Those students receiving financial aid shouldn't have to wait long periods before help comes"). Students wanted tutors and a good system of working with the same tutor on a regular basis. Registration by mail and registration in conjunction with financial aid counseling were recommended. Urban area students expressed concern with the facilities, particularly cleanliness of eating areas.

Some suggestions for improvement are: a more sanitary cafeteria, new chairs and tables, more comfortable student lounges, and lastly, more up-to-date bulletin boards.

A re-entry adult student commented, "the parking lot leaves a lot to be desired for a woman by herself in the evening; it is not well lit."

In the curricular facet, recommendations were varied. Several wanted to see more independent study courses: "Independent study is necessary for those students who are forced to work." Required, non-major courses brought contrary comments; some felt they were a waste of time, while others felt more courses should be required for completion of a degree. Similarly, developmental courses received both criticism and praise. Several students commented that these should be for college credit to prevent a "sense of failure." Others felt developmental courses should not be credit-bearing.

The need for Life-Experience credits was mentioned by a few re-entry adult students.

At my age, life experience credits would be a great incentive for continuing my education.

Grading policies drew a fair amount of attention and several suggestions related to pass/fail grading were made. One student recommended developing "a pass/fail policy on courses not directly related to a major." To compensate for non-attendance, some students suggested lectures be taped or make-up work be available.

Several miscellaneous comments were recorded more than once. Students wanted to see a four year program available at the community college site. Several students wanted standards maintained to insure their degrees were meaningful:

I am not surprised that many people ridicule the "degree" when I realize how little I know with B+ grades and how much less the "average" or "below average" student will know;

and

I think it is very important that students in a college should know how to speak, read and write English. If they can't, they have no right to be in a college, wasting the other students' time.

The open-ended question gave students an opportunity to express the things important to them. Although comments about the survey instrument were not included above, several students expressed gratitude that such a survey was being conducted and expressed interest in the findings. A suggestion was made that there be a time at the beginning of each semester for students, faculty members, and administrators to express their comments and concerns.

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